

Page
8134

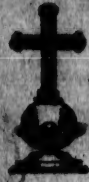
2
ST

For

35525

168267
S 678

3101



168267
S 678

RULES
OF THE
SOCIETY
OF
ST. VINCENT OF PAUL,

FOUNDED AT TORONTO, THE 10TH NOVEMBER, 1850, WITH THE

APPROBATION AND SANCTION

OF THE

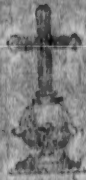
RIGHT REV. DR. DECHARBONNEL

BISHOP OF TORONTO.

FIRST EDITION.

TORONTO:
PRINTED BY LOUIS PERRAULT.

1851.



RULES

OF THE

SOCIETY

OF

ST. VINCENT OF PAUL

Founded at Toronto, the 10th November, 1855, with the
intention of assisting the poor and suffering

OF THE

Right Rev. Dr. DeCharbonnet

Pastor of Toronto.

FIRST EDITION

TORONTO:

Printed by James P. ...

1855



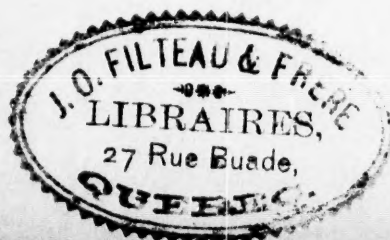
RULES
OF THE
SOCIETY
OF
ST. VINCENT OF PAUL,

FOUNDED AT TORONTO, THE 10TH NOVEMBER, 1850, WITH THE
APPROBATION AND SANCTION

OF THE
RIGHT REV. DR. DECHARBONNEL
BISHOP OF TORONTO.

FIRST EDITION.

TORONTO:
PRINTED BY LOUIS PERRAULT.
1851.



of
en
pr
be
by
the
ric
it
es
on
ro
th
th
ma
the
Pa
Ri
To
the
La
cil
be

ADVERTISEMENT.

It was not till 1846 that the Society of St. Vincent of Paul, which had its origin in Paris about the end of the year 1833, became known and appreciated in Quebec. But no sooner had they been acquainted with the vast services rendered by it in France and other countries of Europe, than several of its citizens, compassionating the miseries of the poor, conceived the design of introducing it in Canada and, on the 12th November of that year, established the Conference of Our Lady of Quebec, on the model of those of Paris. The catholics of Toronto, desirous of following their fellow christians throughout the World in their endeavours to alleviate the sufferings of the Poor, and anxious to share in the many spiritual Blessings granted by Our Holy Mother the Church to the children of St. Vincent of Paul, obtained the sanction and approbation of the Right Reverend A. F. M. DECHARBONNEL Bishop of Toronto, and on the 10th of November, 1850, formed themselves into the Conference of Charity of Our Lady of Toronto, and applied to the Provincial Council of Canada of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul to be aggregated to that Society ; and desirous of being

governed by the same general Laws and the same spirit in one Bond of Charity, they adopted for their guidance the Rules and Regulations of the Society at Quebec.

The regulations of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul established at Québec, which are here given, are substantially the same as those of the Society founded in France. They are an abstract of them, adapted to our usages and wants. The form has been altered, but the substance preserved.

May all the generous men who have consented, or will hereafter consent, to form part of this excellent Society, be thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of these regulations, a spirit which is that of christian charity ; and may they carry on with fervor and perseverance, the holy work which they have so successfully begun for the relief and consolation of Christ's poor.

Toronto, 10 Nov. 1850.

BRIEF

OF HIS

HOLINESS

POPE

GREGORY XVI.

*Granting Indulgences to the Members of the
Society of St. Vincent of Paul.*

GREGORY XVI., P.P.

To be held in perpetual remembrance.

It is meet that the Roman pontiff should especially enrich with the heavenly stores of the Church those pious societies of men who earnestly and diligently employ themselves in the performance of the works of Christian charity. We have therefore, deemed it our duty willingly to yield assent to the pious entreaties of the President and Members of the General Council of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul, first instituted at Paris, who have earnestly besought us to grant to this Society some indulgences, both plenary and partial.

Wherefore, we mercifully grant in the Lord's name, a plenary indulgence and remission of their sins, to all and every one belonging or attached to the General Council of the said Society now instituted at Paris ; to the particular councils of Paris, and of other cities, who being truly penitent, having confessed their sins and received the holy communion, shall have been present at all the meetings of the council held during the month, or at three out of the four.

Also to all, as they are termed, active members of the said Society ; and also to members of council and others, of whom mention hath been made, and who may have obtained the aforesaid indulgence, we likewise grant a plenary indulgence, on condition of their being truly penitent, confessing their sins, receiving the holy sacrament, and being present at three out of four of the conferences or meetings held during the month.

Moreover, we in like manner grant a plenary indulgence, to be obtained by all hereafter admitted into the said Society, on the day on which they shall, being truly penitent, having confessed their sins, and received the holy communion, be received into any active degree, whether of aspirant member, or ordinary member, of member of any particular council or of member of the General Council.

Moreover, we farther grant a plenary Indulgence to all, both active and honorary members of the said society, who, on the festivals of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of St. Vincent of Paul, and on the second Sunday after Easter, which is the anniversary of the translation of the relics of St. Vincent, also, on the Monday after the first Sunday in Lent, being truly penitent, and having confessed their sins, shall receive the holy sacrament at the mass which on the aforesaid days is celebrated for the Society, and shall have been present at the general meeting which is held on those occasions.

And also, we in like manner grant a plenary indulgence to all members and benefactors of this Society, at the hour of death, who, being truly penitent, and confessing their sins, or should circumstances prevent their doing this being at least contrite, shall with their lips, or if unable so to do, in their hearts, devoutly invoke the holy name of Jesus, and shall with a patient and ready mind accept death from the hand of the Lord as a penalty for sin.

We moreover in the customary form of the Church remit in favour of all active members of the said Society, seven years and as many forty days of the penances enjoined to them, or in any otherwise owing by them ; as often as they, with at least a contrite

heart, shall visit any conference or poor family, or the schools or workshops of the poor, or shall perform any other good work in accordance with the object of the said Society. Which partial indulgence every individual active member of the said Society can obtain as often as with a contrite heart he shall assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, when celebrated for the soul of any member, and as often as he shall follow the bodies of the poor to ecclesiastical interment.

We further allow all or any of these indulgences, remissions of sins, and relaxations of penances to be applied by way of suffrage to the souls of Christ's faithful who have departed this life in charity with God.

And finally by the same our Apostolical authority we grant and extend all and every of the above mentioned indulgences to all other, whether councils or conferences, of the same Society established with the approbation of the General Council, whether by itself or by the particular councils of Provinces already established by it. Also, to members who live in places where as yet no conference exists, provided that in these places they shall perform as far as they can the customary works, and fulfil the other prescribed conditions.

Notwithstanding our own and our Apostolic Chancery's Rule concerning not granting indulgences *Ad Instar*, and other Apostolic constitutions and ordinances, and any other things whatsoever to the contrary, it is our pleasure also that copies of these presents, whether manuscript or printed, having the sing manual of the properly-constituted ecclesiastical authorities, shall possess the same authority, and have the same respect paid to them as if these presents themselves were exhibited or shown.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's under the Fisherman's ring, this tenth day of January, 1845, the fourteenth year of our Pontificate.

L. + S.

A. CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI.

[Attestation of His Grace the Archbishop of Nicæa the Apostolic Nuncio in Paris.]

WE, RAPHAEL FORNARI.

By favour of God and of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Nicæa, Domestic Prelate of our most holy Lord, by Divine Providence, Pope Gregory XVI., and assistant to the pontifical throne, and ordinary Nuncio Apostolic at the court of his Most Christian Majesty the King of the French, hereby certify and attest to all whom it concerns that this transcribed copy agrees exactly with the original thereof, which we have had under our eyes.

Given at Paris, at the residence of the holy Apostolic Nunciature, on the 10th of February, A. D. MDCCCXLV.

L. + S.

RAPHAEL, Archbishop of Nicæa,
Apostolic Nuncio.

A. M. VALENZIANI, Secretary.

[Attestation of the Right Reverend Dr. DECHAR-
BONNEL, Bishop of Toronto.]

Verified and acknowledged authentic.

L. + S.

ARMD. FR. M. Bishop of Toronto.
Toronto 25th February 1851.

BRIEF OF HIS HOLINESS POPE
GREGORY XVI.

*Granting Indulgences to the Benefactors of the So-
ciety of St. Vincent of Paul.*

GREGORY XVI., POPE.

To be held in Perpetual Remembrance.

Whereas we have learned that the Society established under the auspices and name of St. Vincent of Paul, and devoted to the exercise of works of

Christian charity, is in an eminent degree advancing the good of religion and the welfare of the faithful, and that the said Society may daily make new progress we have determined to enrich with the heavenly treasures of the church all such as shall bestow their care and wealth to the furtherance of the Society aforesaid, to the end that by the spiritual advantages held out to them their zeal may be more and more enkindled. Wherefore We mercifully grant in the Lord's name a plenary indulgence and remission of sins for once each month to all and every one of the faithful, whether men or women, who shall make over to the *General Council* a fixed and regular amount of alms, provided they be truly penitent, confess their sins, and receive the Holy Communion. Moreover we grant an indulgence of seven years and as many forty days once each month to all the faithful, whether men or women, who shall make over a like fixed and regular amount to the *Particular Councils of Provinces or Towns* established by the General Council. And further, we grant an indulgence of one year, obtainable likewise once each month by such of the faithful, men or women, who shall by handwriting or otherwise engage to pay into *Conferences* approved by the *General Council*, or by *Particular Councils* empowered to approve by the *General Council*, any fixed and regular contribution. Lastly, we bestow on all and every one of the faith-

ful, whether men or women, an indulgence of seven years and as many forty days, obtainable once each month on the days when they solicit and collect contributions in aid of the *Councils*, whether *General* or *Particular*—all this, notwithstanding our own and the Apostolic Chancery's Rule concerning not granting indulgences *Ad Instar*, and other Apostolic constitutions and ordinances, or any other things whatsoever to the contrary. It is our pleasure also that copies of these presents, whether manuscript or printed, having the sign manual of the properly constituted ecclesiastical authorities, shall possess the same authority and have the same respect paid to them as if these presents themselves were exhibited or shown.

Given at Rome at St. Mary Major's, under the Fisherman's Ring, this 12th day of August, 1845, the fifteenth year of our Pontificate.

L. † S.

A. CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI,
Bishop of Sabina.

[Attestation of His Grace the Archbishop of Nicæa, the Apostolic Nuncio in Paris.]

WE, RAPHAEL FORNARI,

By favour of God and of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Nicæa, Domestic Prelate of our most holy

Lord, by Divine Providence, Pope Gregory XVI., and assistant to the pontifical throne, and ordinary Nuncio Apostolic at the court of his Most Christian Majesty the King of the French, hereby certify and attest to all whom it concerns that this transcribed copy agrees exactly with the original thereof, which we have had under our eyes.

Given at Paris, at the residence of the holy Apostolic Nunciature, on the 7th September, A. D. MDCCCXLV.

RAPHAEL, Archbishop of Nicæa,
Apostolic Nuncio.

L. + S.

A. M. VALENZIANI, Secretary.

[Attestation of the Right Reverend Dr. DECHAR-
BONNEL, Bishop of Toronto.

Verified and acknowledged authentic.

L. + S.

ARMED. FR. M. Bishop of Toronto

Toronto 25th February 1851.

INSTRUCTION

I.

OF INDULGENCES IN GENERAL.

—

We are taught by Faith, that after having obtained in the Sacrament of Penance the remission of the sins committed after Baptism, as far as regards their guilt and the eternal punishment due to them, a temporal reparation generally remains to be made to Divine Justice: this is called atonement. The necessity of this atonement, after the sins have been forgiven, is recognized and admitted by all Catholic Doctors, and the works by which we can atone to God, are prayer, alms, fasting, and submission to the Divine Will, in all the sufferings and afflictions of life. As these works of atonement, however, may be, for different causes, and are in fact insufficient, the Church, which is infallible in her knowledge and the exercise of her spiritual powers, comes to the assistance of her children; and in virtue of the authority vested in her by her Divine Founder, she remits, in whole or in part, under certain conditions, however, which she takes care to prescribe and determine, the temporal punishment which had still to be undergone by them in this world or in the next.

This remission of the temporal punishment due to sins actually committed, which have already been

pardoned, as far as regards their guilt and their eternal punishment, is granted by the Church, out of the sacrament of Penance, and is called *Indulgence*.

Indulgences do not relieve a person from the obligation of confessing his sins, of receiving absolution, and of doing penance for them; on the contrary, they pre-suppose all those things, and merely supply the insufficiency of the satisfaction that we might offer ourselves, by the application which the Church, by whom the *Indulgences* are granted, makes in our favor of the superabundant atonements of Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints.

The infinite atonements of the Son of God and of the Blessed Virgin, and the atonements, also, of several Saints who, during their lives, more than satisfied for their sins, actually form, as declared by Pope Clement VI, a real treasure into which flow daily the new spiritual riches of which the Church has been appointed by Divine authority the sole and sovereign dispenser.

It is from this treasure that the Church each day draws the *Indulgences* granted by her to the Faithful to complete or to supply the atonement which they owe to Divine Justice.

The *Indulgences* granted by the Church are *Plenary* or *Partial*.—They are *plenary* when they remit the whole of the temporal punishment due to

sin, the guilt of which must, however, have been previously wiped out by the Sacrament of Penance. They are *partial* when they remit a portion only of the temporal punishment due to sin; for instance, seven years and seven forty days, more or less.

In thus granting a specific number of days, weeks, or years of indulgence, the Church does not pretend to shorten numerically the sufferings in purgatory; the meaning she desires to convey by these terms, is that she has the intention of remitting a portion of the temporal pain equal to that which would have been remitted by the same number of days, weeks or years of the canonical penance which was formerly prescribed by the *penitential Canons*.

The *plenary* or *partial* Indulgences may be applied to the souls in Purgatory, only, however, when the Briefs or Rescripts by which they are granted, permit and authorize this application. The Church does not apply these Indulgences directly to the dead, for over them she can have no more jurisdiction; it is therefore to the living Faithful that she grants these Indulgences. They accomplish the works imposed and offer to God, for the dead, the satisfactory value of the Indulgence, by way of *suffrage*, conjuring him to accept the same for the total or partial remission of the temporal punishment they have yet to expiate.

All catholic Doctors affirm that these Indulgences are accepted by God and are beneficial to the souls in Purgatory. But it is impossible to determine in what degree and to what extent God applies them to the souls for the relief of which they are granted.— This application depends, as regards the extent of its effects, upon the Sovereign Will of God, who has not in this case, as in the case of Indulgences to the living, to ratify a sentence of His Church.

II.

Conditions required to gain the Indulgences.

The conditions prescribed to gain the Indulgences have reference, either to the dispositions of the faithful, or to the works enjoined :—

On the part of the faithful, two dispositions are required, *the state of Grace* and *the intention* to gain the Indulgences. 1st He that is in the state of mortal sin cannot gain the Indulgences—this admits not of a doubt—subject to everlasting punishment, as long as he remains in that state, he cannot claim the remission of the temporal punishment due to sins that have neither been confessed nor absolved.—With regard to the attachment to venial sin, it does not prevent us from obtaining the Indulgences, which, in

this case, may be applied to the other sins already remitted.—However, these Indulgences cannot be plenary, because the temporal punishment due to a sin, though it were venial, cannot be remitted, unless the sin itself has been forgiven, which cannot take place as long as the affection for that sin shall last. 2nd The intention required to gain the Indulgence may be formed in the morning, for all the works that we shall do in the course of the day to which Indulgences are attached. 3rd With regard to the works to be done and the manner of performing them, we must adhere expressly to the terms of the Briefs or Rescripts that grant the Indulgences.

Explanation of Indulgences granted to the Benefactors of the Society.

The Brief *Romanum decet Pontificem*, of the 10th of January, 1845, only granted to the benefactors of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul one plenary indulgence at the hour of death. By the new Brief annexed hereto, *Quam Societatem*, of the 12th of August, 1845, His Holiness, Pope Gregory XVI., has vouchsafed to grant them the following indulgences :—

1st. A plenary indulgence once a month to all subscribers to the *General Council*, provided that on the day they wish to obtain it they go to confession and communion.

2nd. An indulgence of seven years and as many forty days, once a month, to all subscribers to the *Provincial Councils*.

3rd. A similar indulgence of seven years and of as many forty days, also once a month, to all subscribers to the *Councils of Towns*.

4th. An Indulgence of one year, also once a month, to all subscribers to *Conferences*.

All these indulgences enjoin on benefactors who wish to obtain them no other conditions than those of a fixed and regular offering.

As for the payment of this offering the benefactors can do so either every year or every month, etc. ; they are entirely free on this point.

5th. An indulgence of seven years and of as many forty days to all persons who shall make collections for the *General Council* or for the *Council of Provinces or Towns*.

This indulgence is obtained by persons to whom it is granted the same day of the collection, and by the simple fact of collecting.

One indulgence only of this kind can be obtained every month. The Honorary Members of the Society to whom the Brief of the 10th January had already granted plenary indulgences on the feasts designated

in the aforesaid Brief are not excluded from the benefits granted by that of the 12th of August ; they can obtain every month the indulgences before-named, the only condition being that they take upon themselves to pay a fixed and regular subscription. As regards the active Members of the Society they do not receive by the Brief of the 12th of August any new favour except the being qualified to obtain two plenary indulgences each month, provided they undertake to send to the *General Council* a fixed and regular offering.

Ex

I
nis
bee
our
nee
Go
for
hav
He
co
pr
as
ha
su
w

fe

the bene-
they can
amed, the
hemselves
s regards
o not re-
any new
two ple-
y under-
fixed and

RULES
OF THE
SOCIETY.
OF
ST. VINCENT OF PAUL,
TORONTO.

*Extract from the regulations published at Paris in
December 1835.*

Here at last is the beginning of that written organisation which was the object of our wishes. It has been long delayed, for it is now several years since our little association was commenced. But was it not necessary to ascertain whether it were the will of God that it should live, before it received a definite form of existence? Was it not necessary that it should have settled upon its basis, that it should know what Heaven required of it, that it might judge of what it could do by what it had done, before it gave rules and prescribed duties to itself? Now we have only had, as it were, to transfer into regulations practices that had already been followed and cherished. This is a sure guarantee that our regulations will be universally well received and will not fall into oblivion.

Our little congregation was at first styled the *Conference of charity of St. Vincent of Paul*. It so

called itself because it was under this name it had commenced, and that it might not forget the circumstances of its origin, which no one in particular can refer to himself. It occurred to some while defending religious dogmas in the stormy debates of literary societies, that it was not enough to speak, that it was also necessary to act; hence the works of charity to which they devoted themselves; hence *the Conference of charity*.

Having greatly increased in numbers, and being obliged to divide ourselves into sections, several of us wishing, besides, to re-unite in other cities where it because our lot to reside in future, each of these sections, which are all comprised under the common denomination of *The Society of St. Vincent of Paul*, continued to be called a *Conference*.

We shall ever avoid giving our association the name of any of its members, whatever services he may be considered to have rendered it, or of any of the places in which it may hold its meetings, lest we should accustom ourselves to look upon it as the work of man: works of christian charity belong to God alone, the author of all good.

It was a movement of christian piety that brought us together; it is therefore that we do not seek elsewhere than in the spirit of religion, in the examples and precepts of Our Lord, and in the teachings of the

Church and the Lives of the Saints, for the rules of our conduct; it is therefore that we have placed ourselves under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin and St. Vincent of Paul, to whom we pay particular honor, and in whose footsteps we endeavor to walk.

Christ began by practising what he was afterwards to teach mankind: *cæpit facere et docere*: our desire is to imitate this divine model, as far as our weakness will permit us.

The object, aim, and end of the Society is: 1st, to encourage its members, by example and counsel, in the practice of a Christian life; 2ndly, to visit the poor at their dwellings, to carry them succour in kind,—to afford them also religious consolation, remembering these words of our Master, “*Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God,*” (Deut. viii. 3; Matt. iv.4); 3rdly, to apply ourselves, according to our abilities, and the time which we can spare, to the elementary and Christian instruction of poor children, whether free or imprisoned, seeing that what we may do for the least among our brethren, Jesus Christ has promised he will accept as done to himself; 4thly, to distribute moral and religious books; 5thly, to be willing to undertake any other sort of charitable work to which our resources might be adequate, and which would not oppose the chief end of the Society.

The Society is composed of *active, aspirant*, and *honorary* members. The members of this latter class assist the former by their efforts and by their influence: by their offerings and their prayers, they supply the absence of that actual co-operation which their ordinary engagements will not permit them to perform.

The Society should endeavour to attain and practice every virtue; there are, however, some virtues which are more essentially necessary to its members, for the due discharge of the charitable duties to which they devote themselves. Among these are, self-denial, Christian prudence, the active love of our neighbour, zeal for the salvation of souls, meekness in heart and word, and above all, the spirit of fraternal charity. They ought therefore to meditate on those maxims of the Gospel which recommend these virtues, and should make them the rule of their lives. It is for this purpose that these maxims are here detailed, and a development given to them applicable to the objects of our Institution.

1. By *self-denial* we should understand the surrendering of our own opinion, without which surrender no association is durable. The man who is in love with his own ideas will disdain the opinion of others; which disdain, far from uniting, will engender division. We should therefore willingly acquiesce in the

judgment of others, and should not feel annoyed if our own propositions be not accepted by them. Our mutual good-will should proceed from the heart, and should be without bounds. We ought equally to avoid all spirit of contention with the poor, and we must not consider ourselves offended, if they yield not implicitly to our advice; we should not attempt to make them receive it as from authority and by command, but content ourselves with proposing what is good, and zealously exhorting to its practice, leave the result entirely in the hands of Almighty God.

2. Among the poor there are some who have the happiness to be devout Christians; others are indifferent, and some perhaps impious. We ought not to repulse them, even in this latter case; but our language should be applicable to the dispositions of those whom we address; remembering that Jesus Christ recommended his disciples to unite the wisdom of the serpent to the simplicity of the dove. Bounty opens the heart to confidence, and it is by charitable gifts that we prepare the way for spiritual benefits. St. Vincent of Paul often recommended his followers not to try the latter, until the former had been freely bestowed.

3. *Love of our neighbour and zeal for the salvation of souls.* This is the essence of the Society. He who is not animated by this twofold sentiment,

which with the Christian forms but one feeling, should not become a member. We must never murmur at the labours, the fatigues, nor even at the repulses to which the exercise of charity may subject us. We expose ourselves to all these things, in associating for the service of our neighbour. Neither should we regret the pecuniary sacrifices that we make to our Institution, esteeming ourselves happy in offering anything to Jesus Christ in the persons of the poor, and in being able to carry any relief to his suffering members. We should make these sacrifices with an entire absence of personal feeling, and not conceive that the poor whom we have adopted ought to be more privileged than those adopted by others, merely because we may presume that we have contributed to the common fund a larger portion than they.

4. Our Divine model was meek and humble of heart; "*Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart,*" (Matt. xi. 29); and our patron, St. Vincent of Paul, prized nothing so highly as meekness and humility, which are inseparable. To each other we should be kind and obliging, and we should adopt the same sentiments towards the poor whom we visit. We can have no power over the mind, except through meekness; all blessings also are promised to those who use this method. "*Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.*" (Matt., v., 4.) The spirit

of humility and meekness is more particularly necessary in giving advice, and in exhorting others to fly from evil, and to practice virtue. Without gentleness, zeal for the salvation of souls is a ship without sails.

5. It is by the spirit of brotherly love that our Society will become dear to its members, and edifying to others. Faithful to the maxims of our Divine Master and of his beloved disciple, let us love one another. Let our brotherly affection be constant, now and ever, far and near, from one conference to another, from town to town, from clime to clime. This brotherly love will render us able to bear with each others' failings; we shall never think ill of a brother without regret, and then only when we cannot any longer refuse to acknowledge the evidence of facts; even then,—in order to conform ourselves to the will of Him who has confided to each one the care of his neighbour, "*to every one hath God given commandment concerning his neighbour,*" (Eccles. xvii. 12),—in a spirit of charity,—and with all the heartfelt effusion of the most devoted friendship for our falling or fallen brother, we will counsel him ourselves, or cause advice to be conveyed to him. We will endeavour to strengthen him in virtue, or raise him from his fall. If any member of the Society should become ill, his brethren will visit him; will care for him; if it be necessary, will soften and assuage the tediousness of his slow recovery; if his malady be

dangerous, they will see that the consolations which religion affords shall be his, and that the Holy Sacraments of our church shall be administered to him. In a word, the troubles and the joys of one shall be shared by all, in accordance with the advice of the apostle, who has desired us to weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice.

The unity of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul should be cited as a model of Christian friendship—of a friendship carried beyond the grave, for in our prayers before the Almighty we shall remember those of our brethren who have been taken from us.

This sentiment of fraternal charity, this union of hearts and souls, will endear to each of us our little Society. We shall bless it for the good, however trivial, it enables us to perform; we shall love this Society with tenderness, and even with a greater affection than any other association of the kind, not because of its excellence or from pride, but as affectionate children, who would love a tender mother, though poor and deformed, more than all other women, however they might excel by their riches or their talents.

A few other Considerations on the foregoing Maxims.

One of the vices most opposed to charity and Christian humility is envy. We should be vigilant

on this point, not only one with another, but with respect to other Societies having for object, like our own, the solace and relief of our neighbour. We should ardently desire, and behold with pleasure, their prosperity, and the good they accomplish; we should rejoice if fresh brethren join us, if existing societies unite themselves to ours, since greater good might spring from the union; but we should behold without jealousy our Christian friends devoting themselves to other good works, and other Societies working the good work in their own manner, and independently of us. We should have but one desire,—that of seeing all engaged in doing good, and in consoling those who suffer; not considering ours the best, but loving it the most.

The same spirit should ever induce us individually to wish that the offices of the Society should be confided to others, rather than to ourselves.

We should always remember that we are only laics, and for the most part young men, without any mission to teach others; we should therefore show the greatest deference to the good counsel which may be given to us by the Society and its heads; and we must, above all, observe and follow with an absolute docility the directions which our ecclesiastical superiors may think fit to give us. St. Vincent of Paul wished his disciples not to undertake any good work,

without having first secured the assent, and received the benediction, of the local pastors. We should likewise submit with great deference to the Sisters of Charity, and even to laymen who may have offices of charity to perform towards those whom we also desire to succour, considering it as an honour to be the least among our brethren, and wishing to be no more than the servants and instruments of others in the assistance rendered to the poor. Lastly, among ourselves the younger should defer to the elder, and the newly admitted members to those who are of longer standing.

We are the dispensers of the gifts of God, who is the common Father of mankind, and makes His sun to shine upon all. Our love of our neighbour then, must be without respect of persons. The title of the poor to our commiseration is their poverty itself. Jesus Christ came to redeem and save all men, the Greeks as well as Jews, barbarians as well as Romans. Neither should we discriminate any more than he did between those who are the victims of suffering and misery. Nevertheless, St. Paul recommends to Christians to assist, in the *first* place, their brethren in the faith; *ad domesticos fidei*. We, therefore, should testify a special interest in those poor who are punctual in the observance of their religious duties.

The spirit of charity, together with Christian prudence, will induce us to banish from our meetings every political discussion. St. Vincent of Paul would not allow his ecclesiastics to converse upon those differences which create war among princes, or to discuss those motives of rivalry which sometimes estrange nations. It is therefore more essentially necessary that those who wish to be of one mind and to exercise the ministry of charity, should discard all those political questions which bring parties into contact; and they should not introduce any of those irritating subjects which so often agitate society. Our Society is all charity—politics are foreign to its purposes.

In order to maintain effectually that unity of sentiment and to cement that Christian friendship which form the foundation and the charm of our Society, it is requisite that we should only admit into it those candidates who are truly worthy of the affection of our brethern. Previous therefore, to the enrolment of any friend into our ranks we should carefully enquire whether it be calculated to draw closer those ties which bind us to each other: whether the amenity of his disposition and his Christian mildness would enhance the value of that relief which he may be commissioned to afford to the wretched; whether the firmness of his disposition authorizes us to hope that he will persevere in carrying out his generous

resolutions ; and whether he is in a condition to contribute to the funds of the Institution, the incompatibility which exists between the duties of an almsgiver and the miseries of a poor man being evident ; in fact, nothing could be more disastrous than that it should for an instant be supposed that the alms entrusted to the Sons of St. Vincent of Paul had been applied to the personal wants of any one of their Members. Another essential rule, upon the observance of which the future prospects of the Society mainly depend, and which the Conferences have rigorously followed, is to admit into them only such persons as are sincerely attached to the Catholic Faith, not merely by habit, but heartily and with an entire conviction ; persons in a word, who observe the commandments of God and of the Church. The choice of new members is of the utmost importance. It is only by undeviating rectitude of life and constancy in the performance of those acts of charity to which we have devoted ourselves, that our Society can inspire confidence and become efficient in promoting the charitable aim of its institution.

Another point no less worthy of our consideration is the discretion which should accompany our zeal for the salvation of souls. The human heart is not always in a fit state to receive Christian teaching. We must wait with patience the hour which God has appointed ; as He is patient, so must we be. It is

possible that weeks may pass without our being able to inculcate with effect a single maxim of morals and religion. We must not be importunate upon this point. We are not commissioned to perform the good which it is out of our power to effect. Neither should we be discouraged at the apparent fruitlessness of our endeavours. Perhaps the Almighty wills not that we ourselves should witness the happy end which may result from our efforts and our sacrifices. Our charity would be less meritorious and might dispose us to vain glory if we always be held it successful.

The first work of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul, that which most of all appears essential to it, is the visit of the poor at their abodes.—We can never know so well what the unfortunate suffer, as when we go to their dwellings and become the witnesses of all their wants and of all their sufferings. The sight of so many privations is the best preservative against the abuse of riches.—Can we indulge in every fancy, and take a pleasure in luxuries, when we see near us so many poor persons in need of the necessities of life? This spectacle is salutary especially for the young man just entering the world:—in the midst of the giddiness produced by the first parties and pleasures, the visit of a poor family will arrest him more forcibly on the slippery declivity down which he is borne, than could all the counsels of wisdom. He is compelled on this occasion to make or return on him-

self; he sees life such as it is, and every illusion vanishes, to give place to serious and useful thoughts.

Then often, when we take to the poor a little bread to appease his hunger, a few garments to cover his nakedness, we receive in exchange graces and instruction far more precious; we learn patience and resignation in the midst of sufferings; we have peace and serenity of the soul. It is Jesus Christ himself that we visit, when we visit the poor; we go to a faithful friend's by whom we are always well received; we are assured to return with joy and contentment of the heart—a great number of our confrères have declared that they had derived ineffable spiritual benefit from visiting the poor confided to their care.

The visit of the poor at their dismal abodes is the distinctive character of the conferences of St. Vincent of Paul;—the Council of Paris has even exhorted the Presidents of the conferences of that city to visit in person, occasionally, all the families adopted by their respective conferences, to enable them to become better acquainted with their wants, and to assure themselves that the visits are regularly made.

The visit of the poor, so useful to all those who practise it, so proper to entertain in them the spirit of charity by the knowledge of the details of their many sufferings, may under another aspect and with regard

to the poor themselves, be viewed as the foundation of all the other works of the Society.—It is the first step to be made in the career of Charity. Let us then go courageously to those infectious dens where poverty is too often condemned to dwell: let us enter into conversation with the poor, a few kind words will gain us their confidence, which moreover is soon acquired by him who goes to relieve and to console; we shall learn all their sufferings, all their wishes, and perhaps their vices—we shall give them advice founded on a knowledge of facts, we shall obtain from them that their children may go to good schools, and we shall withdraw them from idling in the streets and place them in apprenticeship. Thus you will have forethought for the poor, who want it so often, you will be their Providence; and you will prepare for them better days.

Christian prudence should ever accompany us on our mission to the poor. Unfortunately, especially in large towns, the poor often conceal their means of subsistence, and thus draw to themselves that sympathy and those alms which should be shared by others. Without therefore, entertaining suspicions injurious to the interests of the poor, we should use great circumspection in administering relief. It is not always wise to rely too implicitly upon their first statements. It will therefore be a duty to ascertain their real condition from the clergy or from those

persons most able to afford us information upon the subject. If we wish to become their true benefactors we should represent to them how precarious are those means of charity which we have at our disposal, and how necessary it will be for them to endeavour to earn their own subsistence. In so doing we ought to assist them and point out the means of obtaining employment. If they be ill and unable to work we should assist them in obtaining admission into those establishments for which they may be eligible.

Let us remember likewise, that we must never be ashamed to give trivial alms. That which is small in the estimation of the rich is great in the eyes of the poor, who possess nothing. Our ordinary resources must depend upon the voluntary offerings of each of us, assisted by the charitable contributions of our friends. If these resources do not allow us to bestow large alms, our tender interest for the poor, our very manner towards them will add a value to our gifts, which they do not possess in themselves.

The House of the poor is the point of departure of all charitable thoughts;—it is there we think of putting to profit and of combining together all the works already projected by the piety of the Faithful; it is there we imagine new modes of coming to the relief of new wants, and of preventing the recurrence of the evils which afflict us.

Ah ! what a consolation for a young man, if all his life he can keep in view a family which he has assisted, which he has withdrawn from misery, and perhaps reclaimed from the grossest vices ! Who can tell all the Graces that God will pour on him,, as the price of this generous action that marked the commencement of his career.

In some Conferences it has happened that members, prevented by their occupations, have caused the poor to come to them at their houses to distribute to them the relief granted and to give them advice, instead going themselves to the abodes of the Poor.—This is less contrary to our Institution than to cause the assistance to be taken to the poor by servants ; this last mode cannot be too much blamed ; nothing would tend more to destroy radically the spirit of the Society ; a like abuse, however, has only revealed itself by one isolated act, and loud were our Complaints ! We gave the cry of alarm, as if the enemy had been at our door :—We hope that this cry is still heard by all, and that we shall be sufficiently watchful over one another, to prevent the recurrence of a similar misfortune.

With regard to the mode of making the poor come to our home, we blame it likewise.—The foundation, the essence of our work, is the visit of the poor in his dismal abode ; we must see him in all his rags,

in all his neglect, in the inconveniences of his misery in his improvidence, in his discouragement. This sight in at once an instruction for us and a motive to engage us to devote ourselves to his relief. If he comes to us instead of our going to him, the same result will not be obtained. Who does not feel that the spontaneous visit of him who affords assistance insures him over the indigent family, a moral ascendancy that he would not derive from the interview which one of the members of the same family would come to seek from interested motives? And then let us here elevate our thoughts higher: the Poor are the friends of Jesus Christ; they are his members; they are himself: Jesus Christ holds as done to himself what we do for each of them;—St. Vincent of Paul wished that, when we spoke to the poor, when we gave them alms, we should represent to ourselves and become convinced that we spoke to Jesus Christ himself, that we assisted the Divine Saviour in person—who among us does not envy the happiness of the Shepherds of Bethlem? Well, this happiness we share, when we visit with faith the poor at their dwellings, in their humble mangers, nay, I will even say in their stables. Like those happy shepherds, let us be anxious to perform this pious work; let us hasten to the cellars, to the garrets, to every place where the Divine Infant suffers in the persons of the poor; let us approach those miserable haunts with

respect, veneration, and love; and let us not abandon to others so high a privilege—It was a great favor that was granted to a few humble Shepherds on the very night of the birth of Our Lord; it is also a great favor that appertains to the members of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul, to be called to the honor, and to the blessings of the visit of the poor of Jesus-Christ.—Let us then never suffer so glorious an advantage to diminish, let us be faithful to this great and holy practice to which Heaven is promised! In fine, *let us never neglect the visit of the Poor at their abodes.*

GENERAL REGULATIONS.

ARTICLE 1.—All persons, of whatever country, who desire to participate in the prayers and good works of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul, will be cheerfully received as Members of this charitable Society.

2.—No work of charity which it is in the power of a lay Catholic to render should be regarded as foreign to the Society, although its more especial object is to visit poor families at their own homes. Thus the members may take every opportunity of affording consolation to the sick and the imprisoned, of giving instruction to poor children, and religious succour to those who need it at the hour of death.

3.—When a certain number of persons become members of the Society in a town, they assemble to-

gether in order mutually to practise virtue. This association takes the name of *Conference*, under which name the Society began its existence.

4.—When many Conferences are established in a town, they are distinguished by the name of the different localities in which they meet. They are united by a particular Council, that takes the name of the city in which it is established.

5.—The different *Conferences* of the Society are united by a *General Council*.

CHAPTER 1.

OF THE CONFERENCES.

6.—The Conferences assemble on appointed days and hours.

2.—The members of each Conference will correspond together in order to edify one another, and to recommend to each other, the members of the Society, other young persons, or the poor families who often change their residence.

SECTION 1.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCES.

8.—Each Conference has a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who form the board of the Conference.

Each Conference has also an Assistant-Secretary, an Assistant-Treasurer, a Keeper of the Records, a Keeper of the Register, a Librarian, a Patron of Schools, Trustees or Overseers of Sales, a Keeper of the Vestry, a Physician, Keepers of provisions or stores, Collectors and Porters, or any other officers who may be required.

9.—The President is elected by the Conference. The other officers are named by the President, with the advice of the Board. However, as it is said hereafter, in the Cities where a Council of direction exists, the Presidents and vice-Presidents of the several Conferences, are named by the President of the Council, and the admission of the members who compose them is sanctioned by the said Council.

10.—The President directs the Conference, receives and presents the propositions, calls the meetings if necessary, and superintends the execution of the rules and decisions of the Society.

In the case of absence, his place is taken by one of the Vice-Presidents.

11.—The Secretary keeps the minutes of the meetings, and a register of the names, professions, and abodes of the members, the dates of their reception, and the names of the persons by whom they have been presented. He also keeps a list indicating the

names of the families who receive aid, their abodes, the names of the members who visit them, and the quantity and nature of assistance given to each of them.

He takes note of the changes which occur in the families, and in those who visit them.

12.—The Treasurer has the keeping of the money, at each meeting he takes an account of the receipts and disbursements.

13.—The Keeper of the records has the care of the different papers belonging to the Conference.

14.—The Keeper of the register inscribes the names of the poor who have no employment, in a register indicating the age, trade, and abode of these persons. He also keeps note of the persons with whom they are placed by the conference.

15.—The Librarian collects instructive books which he lends to the poor under the directions of the Conference keeping a correct account of the same.

16.—The Patron of schools receives from the Secretary the names of the children patronised, visits their schools weekly, reports on their conduct to the Conference, and distributes the rewards granted to them.

17.—The Trustees or Overseers of sales, have the care of the different donations made to the Confe-

rence, for the benefit of which the articles are sold by auction or disposed of otherwise.

18.—The Keeper of the vestry collects the clothing for the use of the poor and keeps a list of them.

19.—The Keepers of provisions or stores distribute the different articles they are intrusted with. They transmit to the Treasurer the tickets they receive, which they cannot keep more than eight days.

20.—The Collectors keep a list of the subscribers, receive their offerings, at the periods fixed, and transmit them to the Treasurer.

21.—The Porters have orders not to admit to the Conference any person who is not a member of the Society, except when introduced by a member.

SEC. II.

ORDER OF THE MEETINGS.

22.—At the opening of each Meeting, the President recites the prayer : “ *Come ! Holy Ghost,*” followed by the orison and an invocation to St. Vincent of Paul. After which a lecture is made from some pious book ; each member being invited to read in his turn.

23.—The Secretary reads the minutes of the preceeding meeting. Each member can make observations on these minutes.

24.—The Treasurer publishes the amount of the funds, in order that the demands for aid may be proportioned to the same.

25.—If new members are to be received, the President proclaims the admission of candidates presented and announced at the three preceding meetings: it is the secretary's duty to apprise them of their admission.

26.—When a member wishes to introduce a Candidate to the Conférence, he must furnish the President with his name, calling, and residence, some days previous to the first meeting at which he may be proposed, in order that the President, *who is specially charged with the direction and the honor of the Conference*, may enquire into his qualifications and present him for admission into the Society, if he be found to possess those Christian virtues that should guide the conduct of a member of the Society of St. Vincent of Paul.—The members who may have any observations to make on the candidate, transmit them in writing, or *viva voce* to the President before the time shall have elapsed that precedes the meeting at which he is to be admitted. If no observations be made, the candidate is received at the last meeting.

27.—If the person who is presented as candidate belongs to any secret, or other society condemned by the Church, he cannot be received as member of the

Conference. And if a member, after being received, join any of the Societies condemned by the Church, the Secretary shall be obliged to write to him an official letter, admonishing him to send in his resignation, and if he do not resign within a certain time, the Secretary shall give information thereof to the Conference.

28.—A person not having means to contribute to the common funds, cannot be admitted as member.

29.—A member of the Society cannot, under any pretext or circumstance whatever, receive aid from its funds.

30.—When a person desires to become a member of the Society, he must be presented by two members. No candidate can be admitted into the Society without being published at four meetings of the Conference into which he desires admittance, and his reception as member shall only take place at the fourth calling. Each member will therefore take care to introduce into the Society only those persons who are capable of edifying its members, and who are disposed to love their colleagues and the poor, as their brothers.

31.—The President then reads the reports on the families proposed at the preceeding meeting, before the vote of the Conference is taken: each member may make any observation he thinks useful on these reports.

32.—When the reports have been read, the President publishes the other families who demand help: and selects two of the eldest members to visit and examine each family proposed.

33.—Tickets are then given denoting the help granted to each family adopted, which can be changed according to the wants of the poor. The secretary calls the visitors, and points out the assistance which is granted to each family.

The President requests the members to give information regarding the families they were charged to visit.

Assistance ought to be invariably given to the poor during the interval between each meeting. The time, the number, and the manner of these visits, are left to the prudence of the visitors, as well as the means to be adopted in order to introduce into families the love of religion and the practice of its duties.

Those who request rules of conduct, or advice in difficult circumstances, ought to be heard with attention and kindness, and the President, or any other member, answers according as his experience and his charity may dictate.

34.—If assistance in money, in clothes, or in books be requested, the motives of such requests ought to be developed, and the Conference votes accordingly.

When it is impossible to avoid a grant in money, by giving its equivalent in another form, the member who has received this money, should watch as closely as possible, over the use which is made of it.

35.—After determining the nature of the assistance about to be given, the attention of the Conference is occupied with the appointments to be made, the steps to be taken for the benefit of the poor, and such other interesting matters.

No new family is received without having been visited by two members named by the President; if the family is adopted, it is confided to the care of two other visitors; a member who recommends a family cannot be named to visit it:—a ticket for one small loaf is given to the family thus visited.

36.—Members who are about to leave for a time or for ever the Conference they belong to, inform the President thereof, who confides to others the business with which they were charged.

37.—The Conference then takes into its deliberation such observations as may tend to its support, its growth, and the proper distribution of its funds.

38.—If a poor person dies, his death is announced at the next meeting, and the President invites the Conference to assist at a Mass for the repose of his soul, which is said on the first convenient day; and at the end of the meeting the *De Profundis* is said.

39.—Before prayers, the Treasurer, or whoever is charged with taking up the collection, to which each Member contributes according to his means, but *always secretly*, goes through the meeting for the purpose of doing so. Those who cannot sacrifice their time in serving the poor, endeavour to make up the deficiency by a greater pecuniary contribution. The amount of the collection is intended to meet the wants of the poor families visited ; but the members should not neglect any other means which may present itself for increasing the funds.

40.—The meeting closes by the "*Prayer to St. Vincent of Paul*," the prayer "*For Benefactors*," and "*We fly to thy Patronage, etc.*"

CHAPTER II.

OF PARTICULAR COUNCILS.

41.—The Particular Council of a city is composed of a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, one or more Assistant-Secretaries, a Treasurer, one or more Assistant-Treasurers, of all the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the different Conferences of the city, and the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of such special objects of Charity as may interest them all.

42.—The Particular Council occupies itself with those important measures of ways and means which interest all the Conferences of the city.

43.—The Council decides in what manner the common fund is to be employed.

This fund is supported by charitable gifts from without, by collections made at the general meetings in the city, and by the offerings which, at each Council, the Presidents bring in the name of their Conferences. It is destined to meet the general wants and to assist the poorest Conferences.

44.—The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer form an ordinary Council, to which belongs the direction of the usual business.

45.—The members of the Particular Council are named by the President, with the advice of this Council.—The President is named by the Council, with the advice of the Conferences. The first time, he is named by the united Conferences.

46.—The President of the Particular Council directs its proceedings receives and presents the propositions, and calls the meetings if necessary. He presides over the general assemblies of the locality.

47.—The Secretary keeps the minutes of the sittings of the Council, and a Register of the names, professions, and places of abode of all the Members of the different Conferences of the city, of the date of their reception, and of the names of those who presented them.

48.—The Treasurer takes charge of the Funds of the Council.

49.—The Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Conferences represent their Conferences in the Particular Council. The Presidents of special objects of Charity attend there to defend the interests of these objects. The one and the other make reports, when they are invited to do so by the President of the Council.

CHAPTER III.

SECTION 1.

THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

50.—The General Council is composed of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, with many Councillors.

51.—The General Council is the link which binds together all the conferences, it maintains the unity of the Society. It superintends all that may tend to promote its prosperity, it puts into operation the decisions at which it arrives for that purpose.

52.—It decides on the use to be made of the general fund, which is supported by extraordinary presents made to the Society, by the collections at the general meetings of the Society, and by the offerings which each Conference or each Council sends to defray the general expenses of the Society.

53.—The members of the general Council are named by the President with the advice of the Council.

54.—When there is occasion to name a general President of the Society, the general Council is convoked by the Vice-President. This meeting, which is preparatory, is devoted to the taking into consideration the merits of the persons who might be charged with this important office. The former President, is requested to point out some person whom he may think worthy of being elected.

After maturely reflecting on the choice of one or more persons, the Meeting adjourns for two months. In the interval, advice is given of this preliminary meeting to the Presidents of Particular Councils, who consult their colleagues, and to those of the Conferences, who consult their Officers, or even the Conferences they direct; they all transmit their opinions to the General Council; on those opinions the election is made, of which correct minutes are taken.

While the election lasts, all the Members of the Society, either in private or at their meetings, address a prayer to God, viz.: the "*Veni Creator*," in order that His Holy Spirit may enlighten them in the choice they are about to make.

55.—The General President, if necessary, calls extraordinary meetings: he presides over these meetings, and also over the General Council.

56.—The General Secretary keeps an account of the names, professions, and places of residence of the Members, together with the dates of their admission ; he also keeps an account of the Boards of Councils or Conferences, and of the places, days and hours of their meetings.

He prepares the minutes of the sittings of the General Council and of the General Meetings.

He edits the annual report on the state of the Society's proceedings.

He has charge of the general correspondence, with the Provincial and Particular Presidents or Secretaries of the Councils or Conferences.

He keeps the Records of the Society.

57.—The General Treasurer keeps the funds.—He puts in order the receipts and expenses, and submits his accounts to the General Council.

58.—A member of the General Council is charged by the General President with the Presidency of the Council, if he cannot preside over it himself:—another member is also named by him, on the proposition of the General Secretary, to fill the duties of Vice-Secretary.

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL MEETINGS.

59.—The General Meetings are held each year, on the 8th of December, the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; the first Sunday in Lent, the Sunday of the Good Shepherd; the Anniversary of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Vincent of Paul, the 19th of July, being the Feast of this Holy Patron.

The President can, besides, convoke extraordinary General Meetings.

60.—The General Meetings commence, like the Conferences, by the prayer and a pious lecture.

61.—After having read the minutes of the last meeting, the Secretary calls over the names of members received since the last General Meeting, which names have been transmitted to him by the Presidents of the Conferences.

62.—The President then gives a summary statement of the transactions of the Society and addresses, or invites one of the members to address, the meeting.

63.—One of the Vice-Secretaries then reads a report on the state of the Conferences.

An extract of the report, pointing the movements of members, of poor families, and the amount of the

receipts and expenses, is placed in the hands of the Secretary.

64.—The President then makes known the decisions which the Council of Direction has come to in matters connected with the welfare of the Society, and consults, if necessary, the meeting itself.

The Society deems itself happy when persons commendable by their character, their virtue, their learning, have the kindness, on the invitation of the President, to assist at the General Meeting, and terminate it, as has been said, by some edifying remarks.

65.—After the usual collection and prayers, the meeting separates.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE DIFFERENT MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY.

66.—Besides the ordinary Members of the Conferences, who take an active part in all its proceedings, the Society has corresponding members, honorary members, and subscribers.

67.—When a Member of the Society changes his residence, if there is no Conference in the city or place to which he goes, he does not, on that account, cease to be a Member, but takes the title of corresponding Member; he enters into communication with the Conference, or Conferences of the city near which

he resides, and corresponds with the Secretary of the Council, or Conference of this town. When there is no Conference in the Diocese, he corresponds with the General Secretary. He receives each year a report on the objects of Charity of the Society, and remains in community with it, not only of prayers, but also of its good works, in accomplishing around him works of charity, and in making himself useful to the Society, whenever the opportunity presents itself.

68.—The honorary Members may assist at the Conferences, but they have no vote. They ought to send each year a special offering to the Treasurer of the Council, or of the Conference of their city.

The reception of honorary Members is made in the same manner as that of ordinary Members: it is made by the Particular Council in the towns where many Conferences are established.

69.—Each Conference can have Subscribers, likewise.

Subscribers are not Members of the Society, but they have a claim on its prayers in their quality of benefactors.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE FEASTS OF THE SOCIETY.

70.—The Society celebrates the Feasts of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, 8th De-

ember ; of Saint Vincent of Paul, its Patron, 19th July ; and of the anniversary of the translation of the Relics of Saint-Vincent of Paul, 2nd Sunday after Easter.—On these days the Conferences attend in a body at mass and pray for the prosperity of the Catholic Faith, and for the increase of charity among men, in order to bring down the benediction of God upon their works. If a Member cannot attend, he unites himself at least in intention with his brethern, he prays for them as they pray for him.

71.—The day after the General Assembly of Lent, al' the Members of the Society assist in a body at a *Requiem* Mass, which is celebrated in the city for the repose of the souls of the deceased Members and benefactors of the Society.

OBSERVATIONS.

72.—None of the obligations imposed by those Rules, are binding in conscience. But the Society confides their accomplishment to the zeal of its members, and to their love of God and of their neighbour. Moreover, it will be remarked that mention is made only of young men : but, persons advanced in age have joined the Conferences. Besides, they cannot remain separate from other members who have advanced in years ; therefore there is a mixture in the Society which is useful for the interest of the poor and the stability of the Conferences. However, in cer-

tain districts of Paris, and in the provincial towns which possess the opportunity, they remain entirely composed of young men. Finally, time has already introduced modifications to the Rules, according to the local and development of the work, but the foundation remains; each Conference goes as near them as possible; at least the spirit which presided over their primitive foundation, and which dictated these preliminary remarks is in no manner departed from.

By following up these rules, which were but mere customs, the Christian youth, who form part of the Society, have endeavoured to obtain the following double object, viz:—

To learn to know and love one another.

To learn to know, love, and assist the poor of Jesus-Christ.

The establishment of several Conferences has not been an obstacle to the accomplishment of this two fold object; Christian intimacy has even become greater between Members of the same section, than would be possible between all the Members of the Society united in one conference. One is never so much alone as in a crowd, and large Meetings in this respect resemble a crowd, which bustles and passes on, in which we take no interest and which takes no interest in us. Besides, a correspondence is carried on, from time to time, with distant Conferences.

Those of the same city meet occasionally together, and these meetings and letters bind us more closely in the bonds of fraternal charity. Neither distance nor any other obstacle can be an impediment of that friendship which is founded on a community of prayers and charitable works.

Let us take courage then ! United or separated, far or near, let us love one another, let us love and assist the poor. Let us love this little Society which has made us known to one another, and which has opened to us the prospects of a more charitable and Christian life. Let us love our customs, and our rules ; if we observe them faithfully, we may rest assured that they will protect us, and protect our work. " Much evil is committed," said a venerable priest to another charitable society, " let us endeavor to do a little good." Oh ! how we shall one day rejoice at not having allowed our youthful years to glide uselessly along ! Youth is a field which requires cultivation. Let us not then hurry over it, without indulging in wholesome thoughts of the future ; let us cast an eye on every side around us ; let us gather with care the ears of corn that lie scattered at our feet ; let us do some good ; it will be the sheaf of our provision through life, it will yield us a plentiful harvest before the Lord.

together,
e closely
distance
nt of that
nunity of

rated, far
and assist
has made
ened to us
istian life.
e observe
they will
ch evil is
her chari-
tle good."
ing allow-
y along!
a. Let us
in whole-
an eye on
care the
; let us do
provision
est before

PRAYERS

AT THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE
MEETINGS.

Prayers at the opening of the meetings.

In the name of the Father, In nomine Patris, et filii, et
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spiritus Sancti, Amen.
Ghost, Amen.

Come, O Holy Ghost, fill the Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple
hearts of thy faithful, and en- tuorum corda fidelium, et tui
kindle in them the fire of thy amoris in eis ignem accende.
love.

V. Send forth thy spirit, and V. Emitte spiritum tuum, et
our hearts shall be regenerated. creabuntur.

R. And thou shalt renew R. Et renovabis faciem ter-
the face of the earth. ræ.

Let us pray.

Oremus.

O God, who by the light of
the Holy Ghost, didst instruct
the hearts of the faithful; grant
that by the same spirit we may
be truly wise, and ever enjoy
his consolation, through Jesus
Christ our Lord.

Deus, qui corda fidelium
Sancti Spiritus illustratione do-
cuisti, da nobis in eodem Spi-
ritu recta sapere; et de ejus
semper consolatione gaudere,
per Christum Dominum nos-
trum.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

V. Saint Vincent of Paul.

V. Sancte Vincenti à Paulo.

R. Pray for us.

R. Ora pro nobis.

In the name, &c.

In nomine Patris, &c.

Prayer at the Close of the Meeting.

In the name, &c.

In nomine Patris, &c.

Let us pray.

Oremus.

Most Gracious Jesus, who Clementissime Jesu, qui bea-
didst raise up blessed Vincent tum Vincentum flagrantissimæ
for an apostle of thy most ardent charitatis tuæ apostolum in Ec-

charity in the Church, pour forth upon thy servants that same fervour of charity, that for the love of thee they may with a most ready heart bestow their goods upon the poor, and spend themselves for their souls. Who with God the Father livest and reignest in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

R. Amen.

For Benefactors.

Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, thy grace to the benefactors of the poor, most tender Jesus, who hast promised a hundred fold and a heavenly kingdom to them that do works of mercy in thy name.

R. Amen.

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin.

R. Amen.

And may the souls of the faithful through the mercy of God rest in peace.

R. Amen.

clesiā suscitasti, effunde super famulos tuos eundem charitatis ardorem, ut amore tuo libentissime in pauperes impendant sua, et seipsos super impendant; qui cum Deo Patri vivis et regnas in unitate Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per omnia sæculorum.

R. Amen.

Pro Benefactoribus.

Benefactoribus pauperum gratiam largiri dignare, piissime Jesu, qui impertituris misericordiam in nomine tuo centuplum regnumque celeste promisiisti.

R. Amen.

Sub tuum præsidium confugimus, sancta Dei Genitrix; nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus; sed à periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et benedicta.

R. Amen.

Et fidelium animæ per misericordiam Dei, requiescant in pace.

R. Amen.

LET US PRAY.

We give Thee thanks, O Lord, for the manifold blessings and favors which Thou hast hitherto deigned to bestow on the Society of Thy holy servant, Vincent of Paul.

And now, we beseech of Thee a continuance of these blessings for that Society which is so dear to us all, for each of our Conferences, and in particular for that of which we are members. Grant, we beseech thee, that it may be strengthened, increased, and perpetuated with its primitive spirit of piety, simplicity and fraternal union, so that its labours being utterly freed from, all worldly interest, it may become still more productive of heavenly fruit.

Thou knowest, O Lord, the many wants, both spiritual and temporal that press on the poor families helped by our scanty service. Thou knowest our own many wants. Have mercy upon us, and make us partake of thy boundless mercy.

More particularly do we implore Thee, O Most Gracious Lord, to assist those among our brethren who may be at this moment undergoing trials of any kind. Grant, we beseech Thee, that they may never fail in obtaining that fortitude, prudence, peace, and hope, which come from above, and that their trials as well as our own, being undergone with patience and resignation, may be made agreeable to Thee and bring forth fruit unto salvation.

Finally, we pour forth our supplications to Thee, Our Lord, that through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the special intercession of Blessed Mary and Holy Saint Vincent, our Patron, Thou wouldst grant that the poor families we have in charge, our relations, friends, and brethren, when released from the bonds of this our mortal state, be partakers with us of Thy Kingdom. Amen.

*Prayer that may be recited by a Member before leaving home
to visit the poor.*

O Almighty God, direct our actions according to Thy divine will, that in the name of Thy beloved Son we may abound in good works.

Prevent, we beseech Thee, O Lord, our actions by Thy holy inspirations, and carry them on by Thy gracious assistance, that every prayer and work of ours may always begin from Thee, and by Thee be happily ended. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who, &c. Amen.

THE HYMN "VENI CREATOR."

To be recited pending the election of a President.

Come Holy Ghost, Creator come,
From thy bright heavenly throne :
Come, take possession of our souls,
And make them all Thy own.

Thou who are call'd the Paraclete,
Best gift of God above ;
The living spring, the living fire,
Sweet unction and true love.

Thou who are seven-fold in Thy grace,
Finger of God's right hand ;
His promise teaching little ones
To speak and Understand.

O ! guide our minds with Thy best light, .
With love our hearts inflame ;
And with Thy strength, which ne'er decays,
Confirm our mortal frame.

Far from us drive our hellish foe,
True peace unto us bring;
And through all perils lead us safe,
Beneath Thy sacred wing.

Through Thee may we the Father know,
Through Thee th'eternal Son,
And Thee, the spirit of them both,
Thrice blessed Three in One.

All glory to the Father be,
With His co-equal Son,
The like to Thee, great Paraclete,
Till time itself is done. Amen.

PSALM CXXIX.—DE PROFUNDIS.

To be recited on the death of an active Member, Honorary Member, or Benefactor ; as likewise of a person visited, if requested so to do.

From the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord ; Lord hear my voice.

Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou wilt observe iniquities, O Lord ; Lord, who shall endure it ?

Because with Thee there is propitiation ; and by reason of Thy law I expected thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on His word ; my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch, even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him plentiful redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

V. Eternal rest give to them, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.

Let us pray.

Absolve, we beseech thee, O Lord, the soul of thy servant N., that, being dead to the world, he may live to Thee : and whatever he has committed in this life through human frailty, do Thou of Thy most merciful goodness forgive : through our Lord, &c.

May he rest in peace.

R. Amen.

V. Grant, O God, that while we here lament the departure of this Thy servant, we may always remember that we are most certainly to follow him.

R. Amen.

V. Give us grace to prepare for that last hour by a good life, that we may not be surprised by a sudden and unprovided death, but be ever watching, that when thou shalt call we may with the bridegroom enter into eternal glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

V. May the Divine assistance remain always with us.

R. Amen.

V. And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R. Amen.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
OF
CANADA.

ARTICLE I.

All the Conferences of Canada are governed by a Provincial Council, established in conformity to the dispositions of the Brief of H. H. Pope Gregory XVI, dated 10th January, 1845. Its seat is at Quebec, and its title, The Provincial Council of Canada.

This Council represents in Canada the General Council, which is the Head of all the Society, and the seat whereof is at Paris. It has the direction of all the Councils and Conferences now established, or to be hereafter formed, in Canada—It maintains in that Province the Unity and the Spirit of the Society. It is the medium of correspondence between the Councils and Conferences and the General Council.

ARTICLE II.

The Provincial Council is composed of a President, one or more Vice Presidents, one Secretary, one Treasurer, one or more Vice Secretaries or Vice Treasurers, and several Councillors.

ARTICLE III.

The first election of the Provincial President is made by all the Conferences.

ARTICLE IV.

When there is occasion to elect a new President of the Provincial Council, the Council is summoned by the Vice President. This meeting, which is preparatory, is to consider of a fit person to fill that office, and the retiring President is requested to indicate the person whom he believes best qualified—When one or more names have been agreed upon, for this purpose, the Council adjourns for about two months. In the interval, a statement of the proceedings of this first meeting is furnished to the Presidents of the Particular Councils, who consult their Colleagues, and to the Presidents of the Conferences who take the sense of their respective Boards or even of their Conferences, and each of them forthwith transmits the result of these deliberations to the Provincial Council, which there upon closes the election, and enters on its minutes an exact and detailed statement of the proceedings—Pending the election, all the members of the Society, either privately or at their meetings, offer up to God a special prayer—the *Veni Creator*—that His Spirit may enlighten them and guide their choice.

ARTICLE V.

The Officers and Members of the Provincial Council are appointed by the Provincial President, with the advice of the Council.

ARTICLE VI.

The Provincial President presides at all the General Meetings of the Quebec Conferences and, also, at all the meetings of the Provincial Council. He summons all extraordinary meetings—In case of his absence, he appoints a Vice President, or, if necessary, some other member of the Council to preside in his stead.

ARTICLE VII.

The Secretary of the Provincial Council keeps a Register of the names, surnames, callings, residences, and dates of reception, of the members of the Quebec Conferences ;—and also, of the members of the Boards of the different Councils and Conferences throughout Canada, together with the places, days, and hours of their meetings. He keeps minutes of the meetings of the Provincial Council and of the General Meetings—He prepares the annual report of the labours of the Society and transmits it to the General Council. He is charged, under the direction of the President, with the correspondence with the Presidents or Secretaries of the different Councils or Conferences, and

with the General Council—He is Custodier of the Archives of the Society in Canada.

ARTICLE VIII.

The Treasurer holds the funds, takes note of the receipts and expenditure, and renders an account thereof to the Provincial Council.

ARTICLE IX.

Two members of the Provincial Council are appointed by the President to preside at the meetings of the Irish and French Councils of Quebec, should the Provincial President be unable to perform that duty in person.

ARTICLE X.

The President of the Provincial Council appoints at Quebec the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Conferences and Special Works, and also, the Boards of the two Councils in that City—In these appointments he consults the Particular Councils.

ARTICLE XI.

The funds of the Provincial Council are supplied by extraordinary gifts made to the Society, by the Collections at the General Meetings, and by the annual offerings of each Conference or of each Particular Council in Canada towards covering the general expenses of the Society.

ARTICLE XII.


When a Conference or a Council is about to be formed in Canada, the Provincial Council, enquires into the propriety of recommending its aggregation to the General Council in Paris—This aggregation can only be pronounced on the recommendation of the Provincial Council—And when the Provincial Council deems it expedient to dissolve a Conference or a Council, it, likewise, refers the matter to the General Council.

ARTICLE XIII.

The Provincial Council directs all the details of the administration of the Conferences of Canada, either by its correspondence, or by circulars from the President, and it superintends the execution of the Regulations—under the guidance of the General Council, in all questions that concern the Society at large or that are of an important nature.

ARTICLE XIV.

The President of the Provincial Council of Canada, when at Paris, assists and takes part in the meetings of the General Council, of which he is a member *Ex officio*.



ADDENDA.

The Society of St. Vincent of Paul is established in the following Countries, viz:—France, England, Ireland, Scotland, Algeria, Switzerland, The States of the Church, Sardinia, Belgium, The Netherlands, Bavaria, Prussia, Turkey, Greece, Mexico, The United States of America, and Canada—In Canada the Society is governed by a Provincial Council, at Quebec, and Particular Councils at Quebec and Montreal;—and there are 25 Conferences in the Province—In the United States there are Conferences at St. Louis, New-York, Buffalo, Lockport, and Utica.

FINIS.
